

2002-2003



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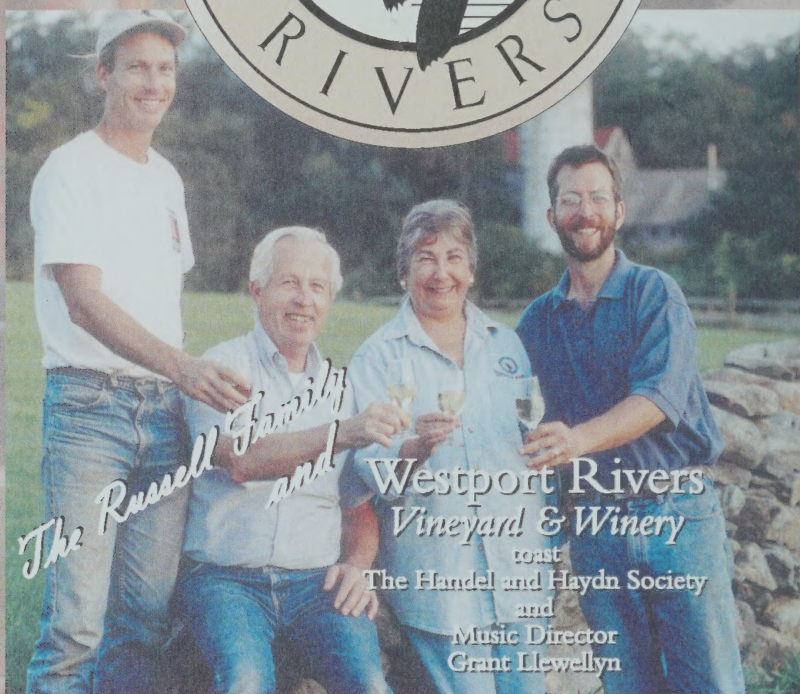
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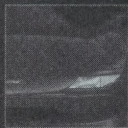
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An English Christmas



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Program

2002–2003 Season

Friday, December 20, 8.00pm

Saturday, December 21, 8.00pm

Sunday, December 22, 3.00pm

New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall, Boston

Grant Llewellyn, conductor

Proper for the Nativity

William Byrd

Introit: Puer natus est nobis

[1543-1623]

Fantasia (Orlando Gibbons); John Finney, organ

Gradual: Viderunt omnes

Alleluia: Dies sanctificatus

Offertory: Tui sunt coeli

Communion: Viderunt omnes

Magnificat antiphon: Hodie Christus natus est

Magnificat antiphon: O admirabile commercium

Matins respond: O magnum misterium and Beata Virgo

5

—INTERMISSION—

Missa *Puer natus est nobis*

Thomas Tallis

Gloria

[1505 - 1585]

Sanctus

Agnus Dei

Deck the hall

Welsh traditional carol

arr. David Willcocks

The holly and the ivy

English traditional carol

arr. H. Walford Davies

Coventry Carol

from the Pageant of Shearmen and Tailors (1591 version)

There is no rose

Anon., c.1420

Here we come a-wassailing

English traditional carol

arr. John Rutter

A merry Christmas

Traditional West country carol

arr. Arthur Warrell

The program will run for approximately two hours.

The audience is respectfully asked to turn off all electronic watches, paging devices, and cellular phones during the performance.

Program Notes

Christmas in the Renaissance

The first two works on the program, William Byrd's *Propers for the Nativity* (1607) and Thomas Tallis's *Missa Puer natus est nobis* (prob. 1554) both take as their point of departure the Christmas plainsong, *Puer natus est nobis*. While Byrd only alludes to the

opening of the chant, a rising leap of the fifth, at the beginning of the Introit and the Gradual (*Viderunt omnes*), Tallis constructs each movement of his Mass around the phrases of the chant.

WILLIAM BYRD (1543-1623)



| | |
|---------|--|
| 1543 | Born, possibly in Lincoln Student of Thomas Tallis in London |
| 1563-70 | Organist at Lincoln Cathedral |
| 1570-80 | Gentleman of the Chapel Royal, London |
| 1575 | Tallis and Byrd secure a patent from the Crown for printing and marketing part-music and music paper |
| 1593 | Byrd moves to Essex |
| 1607 | Gradualia published, includes Propers for the Nativity |
| 1623 | Byrd dies |

THOMAS TALLIS (1505-1585)

| | |
|---------|---|
| ca.1505 | Born, possibly in Kent |
| 1532 | Organist at Benedictine Priory of Dover |
| 1537-8 | Employed at St. Mary-at-Hill, London |
| 1538-40 | Employed at Waltham Abbey |
| 1541-2 | Employed at Canterbury Cathedral |
| 1543- | Gentleman of the Chapel Royal, London (Serves under four monarchs) |
| 1554 | <i>Mass Puer natus est nobis</i> composed |
| 1575 | <i>Cantiones, quae ab argumento sacrae vocantur</i> , by Byrd and Tallis and dedicated to Queen Elizabeth, is published |
| 1585 | Dies in Greenwich |

WILLIAM BYRD: PROPERTIES FOR THE NATIVITY

Byrd's Propers for the Nativity appear in a collection entitled *Gradualia* published in 1607. The term "Proper"—as opposed to "Ordinary"—refers to the fact that these selections were intended for a specific feast day, in this case, Christmas. The Propers are scored for four voices, and the prevailing texture is imitative—one voice begins a phrase and is followed by the other three parts in turn.

As noted above, the Introit, *Puer natus est nobis* opens with a rising leap of a fifth, the head motive of the plainsong. Each line of text is presented imitatively by the four voices in turn. The first two phrases unfold serenely; with the introduction of shorter note values at "Cujus imperium", the music grows more animated. Byrd briefly introduces triple meter at the beginning of "et vocabitur nomen ejus". The syncopation at "magni consilii Angelus" lends it rhythmic energy. Following a cadence on "Angelus", the imitative setting of "Cantate Domino canticum novum" is lively, and "Quia mirabilia feci" is quite animated. Byrd highlights the words "Gloria Patri..." by setting them homophonically (all four parts sing the same words at the same time); there is a return to imitative texture at "et nunc et semper..." Following a brief melisma on "Amen", the opening material ("*Puer natus...*") returns.

The Gradual, *Viderunt omnes* and Alleluia, *Dies sanctificatus* were sung one after the other between the Epistle and the Gospel. Like *Puer natus*, *Viderunt omnes* opens with an ascending leap of a fifth. Entries



Italian engraving of Thomas Tallis

in close succession on the word "jubilate" on a rising dotted-note figure perfectly project its joyful mood and contribute a sense of forward momentum. There is a cadence on the words "omnis terra", and at the end of the next phrase the points of imitation on the word "*Alleluia*" mirror the spirit of the text. Within the prevailing imitative texture the words "*Dies sanctificatus*" are set off by their homophonic setting. Byrd highlights the word "lux" ("light") by setting it as the highest note of the phrase, returning to the same note a total of three times. The final "*Alleluia*" is set as a dotted-note stepwise ascent of a fourth presented imitatively by all the parts.

Almost certainly Tallis's *Missa Puer natus est nobis* was written to celebrate Christmas and the prospect of a male heir to the English throne.

Both the Offertory and the Communion are quite brief and may reflect the constraints of celebrating a liturgy in the confined space of the household of recusants (Roman Catholics who refused to attend services of the Church of England between the reigns of Henry VIII and George II). *Tui sunt coeli* is set in the prevailing imitative style. The ascending leap of a minor sixth at the beginning of *Viderunt omnes* lends it a plaintive quality.

The Magnificat antiphon *Hodie Christus natus est* is punctuated by statements of the word "hodie" with which each of the first four phrases begin, and the points of imitation throughout the motet contribute

to its spirited mood. Byrd's setting of the final "*alleluia*"—two homophonic statements of the word in triple meter followed by several echoes—has an almost whimsical quality.

The Magnificat antiphon *O admirabile commercium* has a more reflective character.

The Matins respond *O magnum misterium* projects a mood of reverential awe at the incarnation. Byrd highlights the words "ut animalia" by setting them to an interlocking falling-fourth motive. Following a cadence on the word "praecepit", "*Beata Virgo*" commences; the minor second at the beginning of this section lends it an imploring quality. After a cadence on "Christum", the "Ave Maria" begins with a rising stepwise melisma. The rhythmic intricacy of "Dominus tecum" lends it greater animation. Following a full cadence, "*Beata Virgo*" returns.

THOMAS TALLIS: *MISSA PUER NATUS EST NOBIS*

When King Edward VI died in 1554, the throne passed to his half-sister Mary, daughter of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon. Protestantism was swept aside and, in an attempt to ensure a Roman Catholic succession, Mary married Philip II, King of Spain. Within months the queen was rumored to be pregnant. Almost certainly Tallis's *Missa Puer natus est nobis* was written to celebrate Christmas and the prospect of a male heir to the English throne. It was a false pregnancy, and Mary ultimately died childless, leaving the succession to her half-sister Elizabeth.

The Mass is a technical tour de force and displays a virtuosic treatment of current and old-fashioned compositional techniques. Constructing a piece around a Gregorian chant (in this case, *Puer natus est nobis*) that unfolds in long note values, usually in the

tenor part, was a style that had been popular early in the 16th century, but was no longer fashionable by the 1550s. In Tallis's mass the cantus firmus is organized according to an arcane number system. The duration of the notes of the chant is determined by the different vowel-sounds of the original *Puer natus* text, so that a "u" sound lasts five times as long as an "a" sound. The numerical plan is not detectible to the ear, but governs the underlying proportions of the work and contributes to the work's slow rate of harmonic change.

While the plainchant in combination with a numerical plan constitutes the structural backbone of the piece, the ear is drawn to the imitative and antiphonal (alternating) parts that Tallis constructs around the tenor. The rhythmic energy of his setting of the 'Osanna' perfectly captures the mood of the text, while the beautiful, almost-mantra-like, succession of repetitions between the two soprano parts complements the serenity of the long notes of the cantus firmus in the "Agnus Dei".

Contemporary performances of Tallis's Mass were not possible prior to 1960 when some of the vocal parts were discovered in a collection of manuscripts at the British Museum. The "Gloria" has survived in its entirety, and missing parts of the "Sanctus" and "Agnus Dei" have been reconstructed by David Wulstan and Sally Dunkley. Only the "Credo" cannot be performed on the basis of surviving material.

-Mary Greer

Musicologist and conductor Mary Greer is the Christopher Hogwood Research Fellow for the 2002–2003 season. A graduate of Yale (B.A. and M.A.) and Harvard (Ph.D.), she directs "Cantatas in Context," a Bach cantata series in New York City. Her dissertation on Bach's sacred duets is to be published by Scarecrow Press. Ms. Greer is Secretary-Treasurer of the American Bach Society.

8 The Carol Tradition

English Christmas carols, a favorite holiday tradition, originated in the early fifteenth century, when the old feudal order was collapsing. Written in a simple, direct style with catchy tunes and refrains that make them easy to remember, they were (and are) accessible to the common people. The texts of some carols (such as *There is no rose*) are macaronic—they employ Latin as well as English; the Latin lines are generally taken from liturgical hymns and antiphons.

The word "carol" probably derives from the French *carole*, a round dance, and early carols were apparently danced as well as sung. Carols typically begin with a refrain (called a "burden") that alternates with a number of stanzas. It is likely that the verses were sung by soloists and the refrain by a chorus.

The origins of the carol coincided with the flowering of Miracle Plays in the fifteenth century. Plays such as the Coventry Plays, which ran from 1400 to 1450, led naturally to the writing of religious songs in the vernacular (the *Coventry Carol*). The majority of carols date from the two and a half centuries between the death of Chaucer in 1400 and the mid seventeenth century. The earliest printed collection of carols that has survived was issued in 1521. Carols may at times have been used liturgically; it is certain that they were sung on festive occasions outside church, for an account of the festivities on Twelfth Night in 1487 reports that "At the Table in the Medell of the Hall sat the Deane and thoos of the kings Chapell, whiche incontynently after the Kings furst Course sange a Carall..."

The carol continued to flourish until 1647 when the Puritans, who discouraged Christmas celebrations of any kind, came to power. Thereafter carols circulated orally or on broadsheets with the carol texts and decorative woodcuts.

-Mary Greer

Artist Profiles

Grant Llewellyn, conductor



Grant Llewellyn, now in his second season as Music Director of the Handel and Haydn Society, has earned the acclaim of critics and audiences alike, and has established his presence as an engaging and dynamic force in Boston's musical life. Mr. Llewellyn has served as Assistant Conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Associate Conductor of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Principal Guest Conductor of the Stavanger Symphony, and Principal

Conductor of the Royal Flanders Philharmonic. Mr. Llewellyn retains an especially close link with the BBC National Chorus and Orchestra of Wales, where he holds the title of Conductor in Residence. He has appeared as guest conductor with leading orchestras of the world, including the Québec Symphony Orchestra, the Toronto Symphony, the Netherlands Chamber Orchestra, the Houston Symphony Orchestra, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and others. Recent projects include Mr. Llewellyn's debut with the English National Opera conducting *The Magic Flute*, *Dido and Aeneas* at Spoleto USA, and Mozart's *The Magic Flute* with the Opera Theatre of St. Louis. He was co-director of the Tanglewood Music Center Conducting Fellowship program this past summer.

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Handel and Haydn Society

Under the leadership of music director Grant Llewellyn and conductor laureate Christopher Hogwood, the Society is a leader in historically informed performance, specializing in music for chorus and period orchestra from the Baroque and Classical eras. Each Handel and Haydn concert is distinguished by the use of instruments, techniques, and performance styles typical of the period in which the music was composed. Now in its 188th season, the Society has a long tradition of musical excellence. In the nineteenth century, Handel and Haydn gave the American premieres of Handel's *Messiah* (1818),

which the Society has performed every year since 1854, Haydn's *The Creation* (1819), Verdi's *Requiem* (1878) and Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* (1889). Recent seasons have included collaborations with prominent jazz artists, a series of semi-staged operas, weekend-long festivals, and world and American premieres. The Society's ambitious Educational Outreach Program brings the joy of classical music to more than 10,000 students each year in over 50 public schools throughout Massachusetts.

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Susan Trout

TENOR

James DeSelms
Stuart M. Grey
Murray Kidd
Randy McGee
Art Rawding
Mark Sprinkle*

BASS

Jonathan Barnhart
Peter Gibson
Paul Guttry
Herman Hildebrand
Brett R. Johnson
Mark McSweeney

* Soloist in BYRD: Propers for the Nativity

The Handel and Haydn Society Chorus is funded in part by a generous gift from the Wintersauce Foundation.

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UPCOMING CONCERTS

Jazz Valentine



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The Dizzy Gillespie Alumni All-Stars join the Handel and Haydn Orchestra for a program of jazz standards and Baroque favorites by Bach and Vivaldi.

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Program Texts

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PROPSERS FOR THE NATIVITY

Puer natus est nobis, et filius datus est nobis: cujus imperium super humerum ejus: et vocabitur nomen ejus, magni consilii Angelus.

Cantate Domino canticum novum,

quia mirabilia fecit.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto, sicut erat in principio, et nunc et semper, et in sæcula sæculorum.

Amen.

Viderunt omnes fines terræ salutare Dei nostri; jubilate Deo omnis terra.

Notum fecit Dominus salutare suum; ante conspectum genitum revelavit justitiam suam. Alleluia.

Dies sanctificatus illuxit nobis: venite gentes, et adore Dominum, quia hodie descendit lux magna super terram. Alleluia.

Tui sunt coeli, et tua est terra; orbem terrarum, et plenitudinem ejus tu fundasti. Justitia et iudicium præparatio sedis tuæ.

Viderunt omnes fines terræ salutare Dei nostri.

Hodie Christus natus est; hodie salvator apparuit. Hodie in terra canunt Angeli; lætantur Archangeli. Hodie exultant justi dicentes, Gloria in excelsis Deo. Alleluia.

O admirabile commercium! Creator generis humani, animatum corpus sumens, de Virgine nasci dignatus est, et procedens homo sine semine, largitus est nobis suam Deitatem.

O magnum misterium, et admirabile sacramentum, ut animalia viderent Dominum natum, jacentem in præsepio.

Beata Virgo, cujus viscera meruerunt portare Dominum Christum. Ave, Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum.

Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: on whose shoulders the world's dominion rests: and his name will be called Angel of Great Counsel.

Sing to the Lord a new song,

because He has done marvelous things.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and always shall be, even for ages upon ages. Amen.

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God; exult in God, all the earth.

The Lord has made known His salvation; before the sight of the nations He has revealed His justice. Alleluia.

A sanctified day has dawned for us. Come, nations, and adore the Lord, for today a great light has come down upon the earth. Alleluia.

Yours are the heavens, and Yours is the earth; You have established the world and its fullness. Justice and judgment are the foundation of Your throne.

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Today Christ was born; today the Savior appeared. Today on earth the Angels sing, the archangels are glad. Today the just rejoice, saying, "Glory to God on high." Alleluia.

O wonderful exchange! The creator of mankind, taking on a living body, has deigned to be born of a virgin, and the man, coming forth without seed, has bestowed on us His divinity.

O great mystery and wonderful sacrament, that animals saw the Lord born and lying in a manger.

Blessed Virgin whose womb deserved to bear the Lord Christ. Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you.

Thomas Tallis**MASS: PUER NATUS EST NOBIS****GLORIA**

Gloria in excelsis Deo. Et in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis. Laudamus te. Benedicimus te. Adoramus te. Glorificamus te. Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam. Domine Deus, Rex cælestis, Deus Pater omnipotens. Domine Fili unigenite Jesu Christe. Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris.

Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.
 Qui tollis peccata mundi,
 suscipe deprecationem nostram. Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis. Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe. Cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

SANCTUS

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth.

Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.
 Osanna in excelsis.

12 Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.
 Osanna in excelsis.

AGNUS DEI

Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi:
 miserere nobis. Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata
 mundi: miserere nobis. Agnus Dei qui tollis
 peccata mundi: dona nobis pacem.

DECK THE HALL

Deck the hall with boughs of holly,
 Fa la la la la, fa la la la,
 'Tis the season to be jolly,
 Fa la la la la, fa la la la,
 Fill the mead cup, drain the barrel,
 Fa la la la, fa la la la,
 Troll the ancient Christmas carol,
 Fa la la la la, fa la la la.

See the flowing bowl before us,
 Fa la la la la, fa la la la,
 Strike the harp and join the chorus,
 Fa la la la la, fa la la la,
 Follow me in merry measure,
 Fa la la la, fa la la la,
 While I sing of beauty's treasure,
 Fa la la la la, fa la la la.

Glory be to God on high. And on earth peace to men of good will. We praise Thee. We bless Thee. We worship Thee. We glorify Thee. We give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory. O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father almighty. O Lord, the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father.

Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of the Father, have mercy upon us. For Thou alone art holy, Thou alone art the Lord, Thou alone, Christ, art most high. With the Holy Ghost in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts.

Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.
 Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord.
 Hosanna in the highest.

Lamb of God that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us. Lamb of God that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us. Lamb of God that takest away the sin of the world, grant us peace.

Fast away the old year passes,
 Fa la la la la, fa la la la,
 Hail the new, ye lads and lasses
 Fa la la la la, fa la la la,
 Laughing, quaffing all together,
 Fa la la la, fa la la la,
 Heedless of the wind and weather,
 Fa la la la la, fa la la la.

THE HOLLY AND THE IVY

The holly and the ivy
 When they are both full grown;
 Of all the trees that are in the wood
 The holly bears the crown.

O the rising of the sun
 And the running of the deer,
 The playing of the merry organ
 Sweet singing in the choir

The holly bears a blossom
 As white as any flower;
 And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
 To be our sweet Savior
 O the rising of the sun, etc.

The holly bears a berry
 As red as any blood;
 And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
 To do poor sinners good.
 O the rising of the sun, etc.

The holly bears a prickle
 As sharp as any thorn;
 And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
 On Christmas Day in the morn.
 O the rising of the sun, etc.

The holly bears a bark
 As bitt'r as any gall;
 And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
 For to redeem us all.
 O the rising of the sun, etc.

COVENTRY CAROL

Lully, lulla, thou little tiny child,
 By by, lully lullay.

O sisters too,
 How may we do
 For to preserve this day
 This poor youngling,
 For whom we do sing,
 By by lully lullay?

Herod, the king,
 In his raging,
 Charged he hath this day
 His men of might,
 In his own sight,
 All young children to slay.

That woe is me,
 Poor child for thee!
 And ever more and day,
 For thy parting
 Neither say nor sing
 By by, lully lullay!

THERE IS NO ROSE

There is no rose of such virtue
 As is the rose that bare Jesu.
 Alleluia.

For in this rose contained was
 Heaven and earth in little space;
 Resmiranda.
REFRAIN

By that rose we may well see
 That He is God in persons three,
 Pari forma.
REFRAIN

The angels sungen the shepherds to:
 Gloria in excelsis Deo:
 Gaudeamus.
REFRAIN

Leave we all this worldly mirth,
 And follow we this joyful birth;
 Transeamus.
REFRAIN

HERE WE COME A-WASSAILING

Here we come a-wassailing
 Among the leaves so green,
 Here we come a-wandering,
 So fair to be seen:
 Love and joy come to you,
 And to you, your wassail too,
 And God bless you, and send you
 A happy New Year,
 And God send you a happy New Year.

Our wassail cup is made
 Of the rosemary tree,
 And so is your beer
 Of the best barley:
 Love and joy come to you, etc.

We are not daily beggars
 That beg from door to door,
 But we are neighbors' children
 Whom you have seen before:
 Love and joy come to you, etc.

Call up the butler of this house,
 Put on his golden ring;
 Let him bring us up a glass of beer,
 And better we shall sing:
 Love and joy come to you, etc.

We have got a little purse
 Of stretching leather skin;
 We want a little of your money
 To line it well within:
 Love and joy come to you, etc.

God bless the master of this house,
 Likewise the mistress too;
 And all the little children
 That round the table go:
 Love and joy come to you, etc.

Good master and good mistress,
 While you're sitting by the fire,
 Pray think of us poor children
 Who are wand'ring in the mire:
 Love and joy come to you, etc.

14

A MERRY CHRISTMAS

We wish you a merry Christmas,
 We wish you a merry Christmas,
 We wish you a merry Christmas
 And a happy New Year.

Good tidings we bring
 To you and your kin;
 We wish you a merry Christmas
 And a happy New Year.

Now bring us some figgy pudding,
 Now bring us some figgy pudding,
 Now bring us some figgy pudding
 And bring some out here.

For we all like figgy pudding,
 We all like figgy pudding,
 For we all like figgy pudding,
 So bring some out here.

And we won't go till we've got some,
 We won't go till we've got some,
 And we won't go till we've got some,
 So bring some out here.



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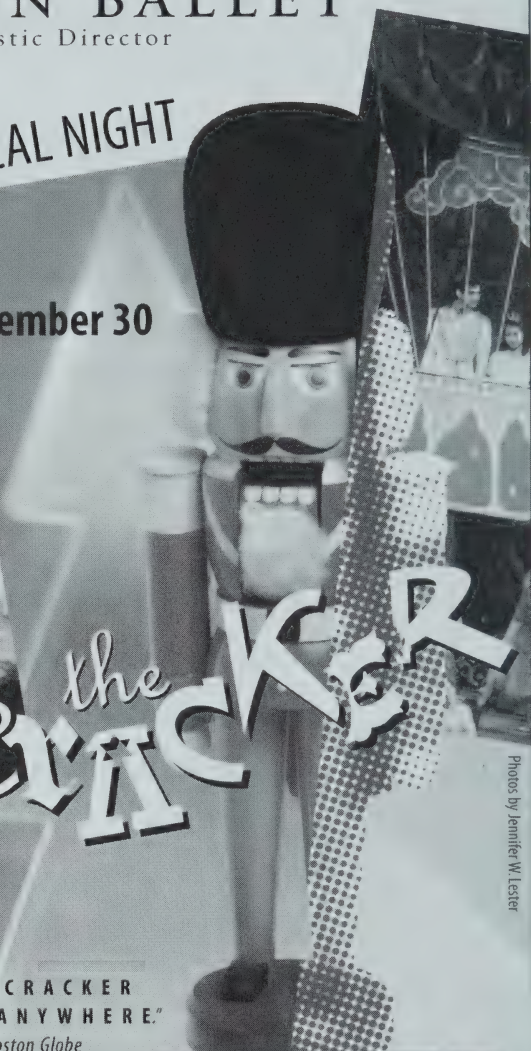
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
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